

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims by replacing all prior versions of the claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121 as modified by 68 Fed. Reg. 38611 (June 30, 2003) as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of purifying water comprising the steps of:

causing contaminated waste water to flow through an inlet into an elongated, closed water channel comprised of a plurality of cylinders connected in a series by a j-shaped or u-shaped tube;

nitrifying, in a an aerobic treatment zone adjacent to the inlet in a first one of the plurality of cylinders, the waste water by aerobic bacteria; and

denitrifying, the waste water with anaerobic bacteria in a treatment zone downstream from the aerobic zone and adjacent to an outlet of the water channel;

thereby producing purified waste water in which the content of a nitrate has been reduced.

2. (Currently Amended) A water purifying apparatus comprising:

an elongated, closed water channel having an inlet for contaminated waste water, and an outlet for purified waste water^{[[;]]} , wherein said closed water channel is comprised of a plurality of cylinders connected by a series of j-shaped or u-shaped tubes;

the channel comprising an aerobic bacteria treatment zone adjacent the waste water inlet, and an anaerobic bacteria treatment zone downstream from the aerobic bacteria zone, adjacent to the waste water outlet.

3. (Currently Amended) A water purifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said elongated, closed water channel is formed by connecting a series of tubes into so as to form a zigzag-shape.
4. (Original) A water purifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said elongated, closed water channel includes a plurality of J-shaped cylindrical tubes which are arranged with upper and lower end portions alternately connected to each other so as to form a zigzag shaped water channel.
5. (Original) A water purifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said elongated, closed water channel includes a plurality of U-shaped cylindrical tubes which are arranged with upper and lower portions alternately connected to each other so as to form a zigzag shaped water channel.